

RONGELAP ATOLL LOCAL GOVERNMENT**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

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20 April 1998

Dr. Paul Seligman
Office of International Health Programs
U.S. Department of Energy
19901 Germantown Road
Germantown, Maryland 20874-1290

Dear Dr. Seligman:

In accordance with a request from DOE and the RMI Foreign Ministry, last January I nominated a qualified member of the professional staff of the Rongelap Atoll Local Government to be my designee and participate on behalf of the local government in the NIH selection process.

I never received any response to that nomination, but learned second hand only a few days ago that the selection process will begin on April 23 without any participation by the local government. As the constitutional organ of self-determination for the people of Rongelap and the entity with the greatest day-to-day responsibility for the well-being of the community, the local government would seem to be an indispensable party to an informed and successful selection process that can enjoy the support of the community.

Obviously, RALGOV defers to the RMI national government in determining its participation as well as that of local governments, but I understand that DOE has determined that there will be local government participation in some cases but not others. While this is hard to understand, I am committed to supporting the process and contributing to its success. Therefore, at RALGOV's expense, I am sending Mr. Gordon Benjamin to attend the selection panel public meetings and make himself available to confer as appropriate with U.S. and RMI officials who are involved in the process, as well as report to RALGOV on the proceedings.

I am requesting that Mr. Benjamin be accommodated in every possible way so that the local government can have a sense of confidence in the selection process and its results. Thank you for your consideration. To contact me, my direct phone line is 692-625-5421.

Sincerely,



James Matayoshi
Mayor

cc: Mr. Al Stayman